

Seriously Kids™

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RED FLAG GUIDELINES

This resource is a tool can be used to accompany the checklists to assist you with identifying if a child may display signs of a developmental delay in one or more areas of development appropriate for their age. It is to be used in conjunction with our SK checklist and only to be used as a reference point not as a screening or assessment tool.

Using this tool provides the foundation for the information to help in facilitating the conversation with and/or seek professional guidance and may allow a professional to refer early before the child begins to struggle to achieve and develop a plan of action to support both child and parents.

If the child is not achieving or showing signs of development in the areas for their age, in conjunction with the relevant age checklist, read through and check the lower age levels for red flags and note down the age which corresponds best to their ability as a reference point for the professional.

A single red flag is not an indication that there may be a cause for concern or potential developmental delay. Therefore, it is important that this be used as a base for starting the conversation with professionals.

In this resource it is intentional to use the phrases cannot and does not. It is important to note that this is to highlight the delay or possible lack of acquisition of a particular skill. A red flag is not a screen for milestone development. Developmental milestones are general for each age and to be used in conjunction with this resource only.



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What are red flags?

Red flags are a potential cause for concern regarding the overall developmental milestones of a child. A red flag can occur at any age that a child is not achieving along the average age developmental milestones. The below milestones are common red flags for professionals, along with parent concerns to seek professional guidance and if necessary, a referral.

Other factors to be alert for:

- If there has been a significant loss of skill
- Lack of or very limited eye contact
- Lack of response to sound or visual stimuli
- Poor interaction with peers and adults
- Difference between right and left hand sides of the body in strength, movement or tone
- Loose floppy movements which may indicate low muscle tone or stiff and tense movements which may indicate high muscle tone.

When to be concerned?

If a child has one or more red flags (in any area) it is a potential sign of a delayed development and we recommend seeking professional advice. A look into the overall development and functioning daily impact for the child must be taken into consideration and a professional is equipped to assess a child.

Who to go to?

If you have any concerns regarding a child's development, it is important to share concerns with the family Doctor or Child Health Nurse as the starting point.

Who will help?

When a child is aged between 0-5 years and presents with a developmental concern there are many avenues for assistance and service professionals who can help.

Most common services are:

- Paediatrician
- Speech Pathologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Social Worker
- Psychologist
- Dietician/Nutritionist

AREA	6 MONTHS	9 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	18 MONTHS	2 YEARS	3 YEARS	4 YEARS	5 YEARS
Social/ emotional	Does not smile, squeal or make sounds in response to people	Not sharing enjoyment with others Not engaging in eye contact or facial expressions	Does not play games such as peek-a-boo (turn taking games) Doesn't show acknowledgement for familiar people and difference of someone new	Displays a lack of interest in others and/or interacting and playing with others	Not using toys for their purpose- tends to throw, drop, bang them.	No interest in pretend play or playing with other children Difficulty in understanding or acknowledging feelings in either themselves or others (happy, sad)	Unable (unwilling) to play cooperatively	Play looks distinctly different than that of peers
Communication/ language	Not starting to babble (eg: ooh, adah)	No gestures- pointing, waving Not using 2-part babbles eg: gaga; dada	No babbled phrases No response to familiar words	No clear words Does not understand simple requests/ phrases such as where is the ball?	Less than 50 words in their vocab Not putting 2 words together- push car Most of what is babbled is not understandable	Difficult to understand their speech Not attempting to use simple few word sentences	Speech is difficult to understand Unable to follow or understand 2 step directions	Difficulty in expressing themselves Can not answer questions in a simple conversation
Fine motor & cognition	Not reaching for toys Not grasping toys Hands frequently clenched	Unable to hold and/ or release toys Can not move a toy from one hand to the other hand	Majority of foods are still puree Cannot chew solid food Unable to pick items up with index finger and thumb	Not holding on to toys Not attempting scribbling with a crayon/thick pencil Not able to attempt a block tower	No interest self-help skills- feeding self, dressing self	Difficulty in helping with own self care through self-help skills Difficulty in manipulating small objects such as threading beads	Not toilet trained during the day Unable to draw circles and lines	Concerns about school readiness Not independently eating and dressing themselves Cannot draw simple pictures (age appropriate such as stick person)
Gross motor	Not rolling Not holding head and shoulders up when placed on their tummy	Not sitting without support No attempt at moving- ie: crawling, creeping motion Doesn't seem to take any weight on the legs when held by an adult	No attempt to crawl, bottom shuffle, etc Not moving around and pulling self up on things Not standing holding on to furniture	Not standing alone unsupported Not attempting to walk	Unable to attempt stairs holding on Unable to run Unable to attempt to throw a ball	Runs not well Cannot walk up or down stairs Cannot kick or throw a ball Cannot jump with both feet together	Cannot throw, kick or catch a ball Cannot balance standing on one leg	Awkward running, walking, climbing and using stairs Balls skills are less developed Unable to hop 5 times on each foot